

**GOVERNMENT OF INDIA
AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
LOK SABHA**

STARRED QUESTION NO:69
ANSWERED ON:07.02.2017
Problems of Agriculturists
Tanwar Shri Kanwar Singh

Will the Minister of AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE be pleased to state:

- (a) whether the Government has taken measures to identify the major problems of agriculturists in the country;
- (b) if so, the details thereof and the steps taken to resolve these problems;
- (c) whether quality seeds are out of reach of majority of farmers, especially small and marginal farmers, mainly because of their exorbitant prices and if so, the details thereof;
- (d) the measures taken to provide good quality seeds to small and marginal farmers at fair prices; and
- (e) the average holding of farmers in the country, State/UT-wise along with the action taken to educate small farmers about the benefits of co-operative farming in the country?

Answer

MINISTER OF AGRICULTURE AND FARMERS WELFARE
???? ???? ????? ?????? (SHRI RADHA MOHAN SINGH)

(a) to (e): A statement is laid on the Table of the House.

STATEMENT REFERRED TO IN REPLY TO PARTS (a) TO (e) OF LOK SABHA STARRED QUESTION NO. 69 DUE FOR REPLY ON 7TH FEBRUARY, 2017.

(a) & (b): Yes, Madam. To mitigate the distress of the farmers, the Government has in the recent past shifted its approach from production centeredness to farmers' income centeredness. In the Union Budget 2016-17, the Finance Minister put forth "Agriculture and Farmers' Welfare: with focus on doubling farmers' income in six years" as one of the nine distinct pillars in the agenda to "transform India". In order to achieve the target of doubling the income of farmers by March 2022 a Committee has been constituted under the Chairmanship of Additional Secretary, Department of Agriculture, Cooperation and Farmers' Welfare for the following aspects:

- i) To study the current income level of farmers/ agricultural labourers
- ii) To measure the historical growth rate of the current income level
- iii) To determine the needed growth rate to double the income of farmers/agricultural labourers by the year 2021-22
- iv) To consider and recommend various strategies to be adopted to accomplish (iii) above
- v) To recommend an institutional mechanism to review and monitor implementation to realise the goal
- vi) To examine any other related issue.

For the present, strategy of the Government is to focus on farmers' welfare by making farming viable. Farm viability is possible, when cost of cultivation is reduced, yields per unit of farm are increased and farmers get remunerative prices on their produce. To this end, Department is implementing various schemes to meet this objective, viz.

Contdâ€2/-

-2-

- (i) Soil Health Card (SHC) scheme by which the farmers can know the major and minor nutrients available in their soils which will ensure judicious use of fertiliser application and thus save money of farmers. The balanced use of fertiliser will also enhance productivity and ensure higher returns to the farmers.
- (ii) Neem Coated Urea which is being promoted to regulate urea use, enhance its availability to the crop and reduce cost of fertilizer application. The entire quantity of domestically manufactured urea and imported urea is now neem coated.
- (iii) Paramparagat Krishi Vikas Yojana (PKVY) is being implemented with a view to promote organic farming in the country. This will improve soil health and organic matter content and increase net income of the farmer so as to realise premium prices.
- (iv) The Pradhan Mantri Krishi Sinchai Yojana (PMKSY) is being implemented to expand cultivated area with assured irrigation, reduce wastage of water and improve water use efficiency.

(v) The National Agriculture Market scheme (e-NAM) envisages onboarding of at least 585 markets on a common e-platform which would help the farmer to get better prices for his produce.

(vi) The Pradhan Mantri Fasal Bima Yojana (PMFBY) is being implemented from Kharif 2016 season. This scheme addresses all shortcomings of in the earlier schemes and is available to the farmers at very low rates of premium. This scheme would provide insurance cover for all stages of the crop cycle including post-harvest risks, in specified instances.

Contdâ€³3/-

-3-

(vii) The Government provides interest subvention of 3% on short-term crop loans up to Rs.3.00 lakh. Presently, loan is available to farmers at an interest rate of 7% per annum, which gets reduced to 4% on prompt repayment. Further, under Interest Subvention Scheme 2015-16, in order to provide relief to the farmers on occurrence of natural calamities, the interest subvention of 2% shall continue to be available to banks for the first year on the restructured amount. The benchmark for initiating relief measures by banks has also been reduced to 33% crop loss in line with the National Disaster Management Framework.

Agriculture is a State subject, the State Governments take appropriate measures for development of agriculture in the State. However, Government of India supplements the efforts of States through appropriate policy measures and budgetary support. Several schemes as stated above are under implementation. In addition, the Government is implementing several Centrally Sponsored Schemes viz. National Food Security Mission (NFSM); Mission for Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH); National Mission on Oilseeds & Oilpalm (NMOOP); National Mission for Sustainable Agriculture (NMSA); National Mission on Agricultural Extension & Technology (NMAET) and Rashtriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY).

MSP is also notified for both Kharif & Rabi crops based on the recommendations of the Commission on Agriculture Costs & Prices (CACP). The Commission collects & analyses data on cost of cultivation and recommends Minimum Support Price (MSP).

Further the Government undertakes procurement of wheat and paddy under its 'MSP operations'. In addition, Government implements Market Intervention Scheme (MIS) for procurement of agricultural and horticultural commodities not covered under the Minimum

Contdâ€³4/-

-4-

Price Support Scheme on the request of State/UT Government. The MIS is implemented in order to protect the growers of these commodities from making distress sale in the event of bumper crop when the prices tend to fall below the economic level/cost of production

(c) & (d): No, Madam. The availability of certified/quality seeds in the country for the year 2016-17 is 380.29 lakh qtl. against the demand of 353.48 lakh qtls. as reported by the States. The Government of India is assisting the State Governments and seed producing agencies for seed related activities through various ongoing schemes/programmes of the Department including National Food Security Mission (NFSM), Bringing Green Revolution in Eastern India (BGREI), National Mission on Oilseeds and Oil Palm (NMOOP), Mission on Integrated Development of Horticulture (MIDH), Rastriya Krishi Vikas Yojana (RKVY), Sub-Mission on Seeds & Planting Material (SMSP) under National Mission on Agricultural Extension & Technology (NMAET) etc. The details of financial assistance available/provided to farmers including small and marginal farmers for production and distribution of seeds under various existing crop development programmes/schemes implemented by the States is at Annexure-I.

(e): State/UT-wise average holding of farmers in the country is available at Annexure-II. A multi-tiered extension strategy with a blend of various extension and outreach initiatives is being followed under the Sub-Mission on Agricultural Extension (SMAE), which is one of the four Sub-Missions under National Mission of Agricultural Extension and Technology (NMAET) so as to empower farmers with the latest knowledge and information in agriculture and allied sectors. These are Support to State Extension Programmes for Extension

Contdâ€³5/-

-5-

Reforms (ATMA), Mass Media Support to Agricultural Extension, Agri-Clinic and Agri-Business Centres, Kisan Call Centres, Information dissemination through Agri Fairs, Kisan SMS Portal, Capacity building components under "Extension Support to Central Institutes/ DOE", Training Courses(MTCs), Skill Training of Rural Youth (STRY), Farmers Capacity Assessment & Certification(FCAC) and in Agricultural Extension Services for Input Dealers (DAESI).